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SUBJECT: UNESCO - UPDATE ON HOLOCAUST RESOLUTION NEXT STEPS

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Warning that Washington's end of fiscal year budget priorities will be finalized soon, the US again asked UNESCO's education sector for details on the recommendations it will present to the upcoming Executive Board on Holocaust education. ADG Education Burnett promised to deliver details next week. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) Charge d'affaires Engelken and Mission political specialist Ostroff met with ADG Education, Nick Burnett and Chief of Section for the Promotion of Right and Values in Education Linda King on 20 June to review progress on the recommendations being prepared for the 180th Executive Board regarding the Holocaust Education resolution passed by the 34th General Conference in fall of 2007.

¶3. (U) (Background: Today's meeting was the result of a misfire by the Education Sector's extra budgetary fundraiser, Svein Ostveitt, who called the Mission last week wanting to discuss funding for Holocaust Education. He was told that we had had no contact with the Education sector on progress since February 28, and that any talk of funding was premature before we had more information on the recommendations that would be proposed to the Executive Board.)

¶4. (U) Burnett started the meeting by complaining about a lack of resources, noting that his budget of \$33 million per biennium is insufficient to accomplish the demands made on his sector. He said that he hoped that his meeting in Washington last week with DAS Gerry Anderson would resolve the problem, at least in connection with the Holocaust Education initiatives. Charge Engelken quickly disabused Burnett of the idea that funding would be available if Washington didn't have an opportunity to see and comment on the recommendations before they moved forward to the Executive Board.

¶5. (U) Burnett noted that he had met with Israeli Ambassador Kornbluth yesterday, and had discussed possible financing of an associate expert position dedicated to the Holocaust Education. (Note: Israel, like the US, does not yet have a memorandum of understanding with UNESCO to create associate expert positions. Also, as of one day before the hurriedly arranged meeting with Kornbluth, the Israelis had expressed their displeasure with progress made by the Education sector.)

¶6. (U) Burnett pompously mentioned that he is personally heading a working group, "to signal the importance of the subject", which met for the second time on June 19. Linda King said that all of UNESCO's sectors are represented, except Science. King explained that they are working on developing ideas that can be worked into a funding proposal. She added that they are trying to refine the ideas into something that will produce practical and tangible results. (Note: Burnett mentioned that they had received the list of experts, US and others, that had been supplied by the Holocaust Museum experts in Washington through the Mission, but as far as the Mission knows, UNESCO has not been in touch with anyone we suggested they contact.)

¶7. (U) For the moment, King said that they have three main "clusters" in mind: The first is working with the Associated Schools program, UNESCO university chairs, and existing teacher training programs. The second cluster of ideas is built around the idea of bringing together a group of experts to look at existing

learning materials and to identify "good practices" on holocaust education that might be consolidated into a teacher's handbook. Finally, the third element is to work with the UN Outreach program by creating a link on the Education Sector's webpage to open an internet portal via UNESCO.

¶18. (U) King also said that they are discussing the possibility of organizing a lunch-time seminar during the upcoming Executive Board on "good practices" spotlighting the UN Outreach program.

¶19. (U) Charge Engelken told Burnett that Washington would be interested in getting some more detailed information about the recommendations Burnett will send to the Executive Board before we can seriously look at possible budget assistance. We do not want to read about UNESCO's plans for the first time when we see the Executive Board documents in September. Burnett again promised to deliver a more information next week.

¶10. (U) Comment: ADG Burnett's attitude during the meeting made it clear that he was grudgingly granting us an audience only due to our complaints about a lack of consultation on this since February 2008. He appeared annoyed throughout our discussion that the meeting had been necessary. Most disturbing, however, was the Burnett's apparent position that UNESCO can do little or nothing without extra-budgetary contributions. End comment.

OLIVER